



# **TJIC Alert**

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**May 2012**

The *TJIC Alert* is an electronic product of the Thomas Jefferson Information Center, designed to provide current information about issues, debates, and commentaries in the United States.

Internet users may access the full text of some titles directly from the Internet. The Internet address (URL) of the websites is indicated in the citation when available.

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The TJIC is open Mondays through Fridays, except on American and Philippine holidays, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. by appointment only.

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## **Democracy & Civil Society**

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### **DEMOCRACY**

#### **1. Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy**

U.S. Department of Education

January 2012

40 p.

Full Text: <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/road-map-call-to-action.pdf>

The report argues that civics education should be reinvigorated and reimagined. College students also should know about the political levers that influence change and how to conduct public problem-solving with diverse partners. "Unfortunately, civic learning and democratic engagement are add-ons rather than essential parts of the core academic mission," the report said. Basic civics knowledge is lacking as well. The National Assessment of Education Progress reports that only one-fourth of high school graduates are proficient in topics such as the American political system, principles of democracy, world affairs, and the roles of citizens.

#### **2. United Nations E-Government Survey 2012: E-Government for the People**

United Nations

February 2012

160 p.

Full-Text: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan048065.pdf>

The report examines the institutional framework for e-government and finds that the presence of a national coordinating authority can help overcome internal barriers and focus minds on integrated responses to citizen concerns, an important lesson for sustainable development actors. The Survey also argues that e-government provides administrators with powerful tools for grappling with problems of social equity and the digital divide. The caveat is that governments must find effective channels of communication that fit national circumstances while also taking steps to increase usage of online and mobile services in order to realize their full benefit to citizens.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **3. National Global Change Research Plan 2012-2021: A Strategic Plan for the U. S. Global Change Research Program**

U.S. Global Change Research Program

2012

Fact Sheet: <http://library.globalchange.gov/the-national-global-change-research-plan-2012-2021-factsheet>

Full Text: <http://downloads.globalchange.gov/strategic-plan/2012/usgcrp-strategic-plan-2012.pdf>

The U.S. Global Change Research Program presents the National Global Change Research Plan 2012-2021: A Strategic Plan for the U.S. Global Change Research Program. The development of this plan is mandated by the Global Change Research Act of 1990 and will serve as the guiding document for USGCRP for the next decade. The Plan is built around four strategic goals: Advance Science, Inform Decisions, Conduct Sustained Assessments, and Communicate and Educate. In addition to these four goals, the Plan emphasizes the importance of national and international partnerships that leverage Federal investments and provide for the widest use of Program results. The Plan builds on the Program's strengths in integrated observations, modeling, and information services for science that serves societal needs.

### **4. Southeast Asia: Minding the Gap Between Democracy and Governance**

Donald K. Emmerson

Journal of Democracy

April 2012

Do democracy and good governance necessarily go hand-in-hand? In most Southeast Asian countries, a gap exists between the two. How should we understand good governance in an authoritarian context? And what does poor governance mean for the legitimacy of democracy?

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **5. A Plague on All Houses**

Pranab Bardhan

YaleGlobal

May 2, 2012

Full Text: <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/plague-all-houses>

In China, India and the U.S., political leadership is trapped in systems of governance that reinforce power, encouraging short-term gain with grave long-term costs. Complex policies mask dysfunction, curtail innovation that threatens the status quo, and ease corruption for those in the know. Dysfunctional government is unleashing inequality and dangerous populism in all three nations, warns Pranab Bardhan. Enacting government mechanisms that build long-term commitment among politicians and citizens could boost all political systems and help resolve pressing domestic and global problems.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **CIVIL SOCIETY**

### **6. Views of Law Enforcement, Racial Progress and News Coverage of Race**

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

March 30, 2012

Full Text: <http://www.people-press.org/2012/03/30/blacks-view-of-law-enforcement-racial-progress-and-news-coverage-of-race/?src=prc-headline>

The Trayvon Martin case has highlighted issues relating to the treatment of blacks by local police departments, the state of race relations in the U.S. and press coverage of African Americans. Pew Research Center surveys in recent years have covered the opinions of African Americans on these and other issues.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **7. Public Views of the Divide between Religion and Politics**

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

February 27, 2012

Full Text: <http://www.people-press.org/2012/02/27/public-views-of-the-divide-between-religion-and-politics/?src=prc-headline>

Recent comments by presidential candidate Rick Santorum have brought renewed attention to the role of religion in politics. In both 2010 and 2008, narrow majorities said that churches and other houses of worship should keep out of political matters rather than express their views on social and political questions.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **8. Religious Freedom Is Social Justice**

George Weigel

Ethics and Public Policy

March 12, 2012

Full Text: [http://eppc.org/publications/pubID.4691/pub\\_detail.asp](http://eppc.org/publications/pubID.4691/pub_detail.asp)

Weigel argues that the Administration's mandate is an attack on religious freedom and should be opposed as a violation of the first amendment to the Constitution.

# **ELECTIONS**

## **9. Contemporary Developments in Presidential Elections**

Congressional Research Service January 9, 2012

54 p.

Full Text: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42139.pdf>

This report considers contemporary developments in presidential elections. It emphasizes three topics chosen for their recurring importance and notable recent developments: (1) nominating procedures; (2) campaign finance; and (3) the electoral college. The report highlights significant developments in these areas, particularly for the 2008 and 2012 elections. It also provides background information about the presidential election process in general.

## **10. 2012 Presidential Primary Calendar**

National Conference of State Legislatures

January 2012

Full Text: <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections-campaigns/2012-presidential-primary-calendar.aspx>

Presidential candidate nominating events -- primaries in some states, and caucuses in others -- begin in Iowa on January 3, 2012 and end in Utah on June 26, 2012. This year's "Super Tuesday" falls on March 6, when 14 states will hold presidential primaries or caucuses.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **11. Social Networking Sites and Politics**

Lee Rainie and Aaron Smith

16 p.

Pew Internet & American Life Project

March 12, 2012

Full Text: [http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2012/PIP\\_SNS\\_and\\_politics.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2012/PIP_SNS_and_politics.pdf)

It turns out that birds of a feather don't always flock together on social networking sites when it comes to politics. As a rule, the most active and engaged political participants on SNS sit at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum, yet their experiences around political material on SNS are quite similar. Very liberal users and very conservative users are often the most likely to have acted for and against others

on SNS. They are also more likely than others to have been surprised by their friends' political views and to be in networks where they agree with what their friends post. Still, even with them, there is as much frequency of disagreement as there is of agreement.  
[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **12. M-Campaigning: Mobile Technology and Public Outreach**

Darrell M. West

Brookings Institution

February 14, 2012

Full Text:

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2012/0214\\_campaign\\_tech\\_west/0214\\_campaign\\_tech\\_west.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2012/0214_campaign_tech_west/0214_campaign_tech_west.pdf)

In 2008, candidate Barack Obama pioneered several innovative applications of digital technology. With the help of the Internet, he raised \$750 million. He made use of social media platforms such as Facebook and MySpace to identify and communicate with supporters around the country. Four years later, smartphones and handheld devices have proliferated and now outnumber desktop computers. Candidates, voters, activists, and reporters are using these vehicles for public outreach, fundraising, field organization, political persuasion, media coverage, and government accountability. Unlike 2008, where text messaging was the dominant feature of mobile campaign outreach, this year there has been a proliferation of mobile ads, video, web links, and apps.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

## **13. What the Public Knows about the Political Parties**

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

April 11, 2012 10 p.

Full Text: <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/04-11-12%20Knowledge%20Release.pdf>

Most Americans can correctly identify the relative positions of the Republican and Democratic parties on the major issues of the day. But a review of what Americans know about the political parties shows that the public is better informed about the partisan affiliations of two popular recent presidents - Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton - than it is about the positions of the parties on key issues that dominate the current national debate.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

# **GENDER AWARENESS**

## **14. World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education**

UNESCO

March 2012

94 p.

Full Text: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002155/215522E.pdf>

With over 120 maps, charts and tables, the UNESCO World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education enables readers to visualize the educational pathways of girls and boys in terms of access, participation and progression from pre-primary to tertiary education. The Atlas features a wide range of sex-disaggregated data and gender indicators from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. It also illustrates the extent to which gender disparities in education have changed since 1970 and are shaped by factors such as national wealth, geographic location, investment in education and fields of study.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **15. The Gender Gap: Three Decades Old, as Wide as Ever**

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

March 29, 2012

Full Text: <http://www.people-press.org/2012/03/29/the-gender-gap-three-decades-old-as-wide-as-ever/?src=prc-headline>

According to the survey, Barack Obama's advantages among women voters over his GOP rivals are striking, with women favoring Obama over Mitt Romney by 20 points and over Rick Santorum by 26 points. When it comes to the political parties, 51% of women identify with the Democrats compared to 42% of men.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

### **16. A Gender Reversal on Career Aspirations**

Eileen Patten and Kim Parker

8 p.

Pew Social & Demographic Trends

April 19, 2012

Full Text: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2012/04/Women-in-the-Workplace.pdf>

Reversing traditional gender roles, young women now surpass young men in saying that achieving success in a high-paying career or profession is important in their lives. Two-thirds (66%) of young women ages 18 to 34 rate career high on their list of life priorities, compared with 59% of young men. In 1997, 56% of young women and 58% of young men felt the same way. There has also been an increase over the last 15 years in the share of middle-aged and older women who say being successful in a high-paying career or profession is "one of the most important things" or "very important" in their lives. Today, about the same share of women and men ages 35 to 64 share this view.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

### **17. More Support for Gun Rights, Gay Marriage than in 2008 or 2004**

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

April 25, 2012

13 p.

Full Text: <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/4-25-12%20Social%20Issues.pdf>

Public opinion has shifted since the last two presidential campaigns on a pair of contentious social issues, gun control and gay marriage, according to the latest national survey. Americans have become more conservative on gun control and more liberal on gay marriage. On gun control, 49% of Americans say it is more important to protect the rights of Americans to own guns, while 45% say it is more important to control gun ownership. The public is divided over gay marriage: 47% favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally, while 43% are opposed. But that contrasts to the attitudes of Americans in 2008 when 39% favored and 51% opposed gay marriage. In 2004, 60% of the public opposed gay marriage.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

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**TJIC Alert Issue: May 2012**

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